

A TRIFLE FROM BRIGHTON.

THOSE who can remember Brighton as it was five-and-twenty years ago, may well lift up their hands now with astonishment, and cry, "prodigious!" Such an extent of large showy residences next the sea, *three miles* of them, if we mistake not, and such an esplanade, can be found no where else. It is true, little can be said of their architecture. One is constantly reminded of Colman's "Prig-architect,"—

"— Where, still greater lengths of taste
to go,
He warps his tenements into a bow;
Nails a scant canvas, propt on slight deal
sticks,
Nick-named veranda, to the first-floor
bricks;
Before the whole, in one snug segment
drawn,
Claps half a rood of turf he calls a lawn;
Then, chuckling at his lath and plaster
bubble,
Dabs it the Crescent, and the rents are
double."

Even in the most recently erected houses, the taste displayed is far from the purest; and the absence of professional assistance, except in some few instances, is strikingly and painfully evident. Architects, as a body, receive a vast deal of abuse for matters in which they are in no degree concerned. With the tasty crescents which the rhymist, quoted above, ascribes to "prig-architects," they had in truth very little to do. Indifferent, however, as the architecture may be, the amount of capital and convenience which has been accumulated here in a short time is enormous, and must excite the astonishment of those foreigners who visit the place.

What is to be done with the "Pavilion," that quaint offspring of extravagance and bad taste, seems still uncertain.

"A palace, of course, you must have for your king."

wrote Mr. Planché, in his "Aristophanes,"—

"Nothing easier is 'neath the sun done;
Only if you would build the right sort of a
thing,
Don't look for a model in London."

And it might be echoed, as every one knows and admits, with still greater force,

"Don't look for the model in Brighton."

Nevertheless we should be sorry to see it taken down, as, apart from the curiosity of the thing, it may serve as a warning to succeeding sovereigns; singing in a powerful voice,—

"Still follow sense, of every art the soul."

The appearance of the town on approach, instead of being injured by the railway, as was asserted would be the case, is immensely improved. The effect of the curved viaduct for the Lewes line, with its twenty-seven lofty arches, threading the Downs, with the clustering houses seen behind, is exceedingly striking, — in some points of view even magnificent. The buildings on the Brighton-line, by the way, with the exception of the main station there, are beyond criticism. If but a small portion of the enormous sums that were wasted in preliminary struggles had been applied under tasteful direction to the adornment of the line, good seed would have been sown in the district through which it passes, and would have produced fruit in due time.

The Brighton council will do well to keep the improvement of the town, and the improvement of the appearance of the town, constantly before them, not merely seizing all opportunities to effect it that may occur, but diligently seeking them. Money laid out with this end in view, will return good interest. Above all things, when they do expend money in decorations, or are concerned in the erection of public buildings, let them obtain good professional advice. The gawky and ungraceful fountain on the Steyne (which, like most English fountains, seldom plays, and when it does, in a shy, heavy way, as if ashamed of being caught at it), is one of the most recent instances of the want of such guidance. In many respects Brighton seems exceedingly well governed, and what we have said is not intended in ill part, but suggestively.

Church room appears to be much needed, at all events, during the greater part of the year. A new church is rising near the "Ship," of considerable size, but others would seem to be required. Moreover, a better mode of obtaining the contribution of chance visitors to their maintenance than is now pursued in some of them, is greatly to be desired. We were pained on entering the *Chapel Royal*, last Sunday (the strangest looking apartment, by the way, architecturally viewed, that ever boasted such a title), to be stopped in *limine* by a money taker, who demanded one shilling each from our party, and gave us a check, in play-house fashion, which ought to have procured us seats, but did not, until, with strict adherence to the model, seemingly followed, the pew-keeper had been personally satisfied that it was right to keep the promise virtually made by the proprietors at the door. Our business is more with the church architectural than the church ministrant, if we may use the word, but a proceeding of this sort, which raises feelings incompatible with the purpose of the day, really concerns us all.

The railway has opened several easy and pleasant excursions, in which resources Brighton was formerly deficient. A very short ride behind the iron-horse brings visitors or residents, anxious for leafy trees and a rural ramble, to several charming retreats. To the more inquiring, and to our archaeological readers in particular, *Lewes*, beautifully situated in a valley amongst hills, offers many attractions. The castle, where the ruins are clean swept and garnished; the priory, though

"scattered lie
The wrecks of this proud pile 'mid arches gray,
Whilst hollow winds through mantling ivy sigh,
And e'en the mouldering shrine is sent away."

Southover Church and Gundreda's tomb, a beautiful piece of Norman carving; the much talked-of remains of Gundreda and her husband (discovered, as our readers remember, not very long ago); some curious old houses; and Malling Church, whereof the first stone was laid about 1628, by the accomplished John Evelyn, the author of "Sylva," are the most prominent.

On the other side, at the Shorehams, old and new, are two very interesting old churches; and, to go a little farther, *Chichester* and its cathedral may be visited without difficulty, and will amply pay for the journey.

None of our readers, however, who visit Brighton, should omit seeing *New Shoreham Church*; as, besides being full of interest, it is a study of great practical value. It belongs, as all our architectural readers know, even if they have not been there, to that period when the early English style was gradually superseding, or growing out of the Norman. It was originally a cross church of very large size, with a massive square tower at the intersection of the transepts, but the nave, with the exception of one compartment, has been destroyed, and the transepts and choir now form the parish church. The foundations and parts of the nave walls remain, so that the whole plan may be clearly seen; the walls consist chiefly of flint and beach stones. It was commenced wholly in the semi-circular style, but before the church was finished, the pointed arch was introduced, and in the choir obtained predominance. Various alterations followed, and during the perpendicular period (the fifteenth century), windows of the style of that time were inserted. Around the inside of the walls of the choir is a very interesting semi-circular arcade; and in the early pointed work, which followed, the same ornament that appears in the arch of the arcade was adopted, and shews a continuance of progress which is instructive. The early English triforium of the choir is very elegant. The font is Norman. At the east end of the south side of the choir is an "aumbry," and in the north transept is an early English piscina.

The transept and tower retain all their Norman characteristics, but in the top story of the latter, externally, the pointed arch is seen on all four sides canopied semi-circular openings. The exterior of the east end of the church is engraved in Pugin's "Specimens" (Vol. I.). The lower story has three connected semi-circular headed openings, with short columns, and the upper story an elegant early English triplet, with a quatrefoil ornament in the string beneath the eill, of singular design.

In the gable above the triplet is a circular window, of the early wheel-form, with semi-circular arches, and small shafts converging to the centre,—out of which grew the magnificent rose-windows of a later period.

The church at *Old Shoreham* is also a cross church of Norman foundation, and has been recently restored, the outside with flint and blue mortar. The chancel is pointed; there is a piscina on the south side, and the rood-screen remains. The arches under the tower are decorated with zigzags and other Norman ornaments. The tower is crowned with a low pyramidal roof.

Bramber Church, only a short distance from Shoreham, is peculiar in having the tower over the chancel. The castle, near it, is a pretty object.

Seyning Church is another curious Norman edifice close by, and has some valuable details. It was formerly much larger. The nave is lofty, and has massive cylindrical columns and enriched arches. The east end is of later date. The tower presents externally alternate squares of ashlar and flint-work. We will not attempt however, to name all the old churches to be found within an easy distance from the town;—we have not even alluded to the mother church on the hill, with its curious font, *Chalk Church* down in the valley, wherein there are some interesting mural paintings, discovered a few years ago, and figured in "The Archaeologia," or *Hove Church*, which lies in the road to Shoreham. Our memorandum has been pencilled between the "Sad sea wave," and London-bridge, literally and to a greater extent *currentis calamo* than Latin ever dreamt of, and pretends to be nothing more than "a trifle from Brighton" with good intent.

PROGRESS OF BUILDING AND PUBLIC WORKS IN PARIS.

THE quantity of building going on in Paris at this moment, whether, on the part of the French government, the municipal authorities, or of private individuals, is immense. One cannot go into any quarter of the town without being struck with the amount and variety of works doing, and the activity with which they are pushed forward. Here are whole quarters rising above the ground; stone being piled upon stone, and brick upon brick, as fast as they can be carried, while new streets are cutting here and there, houses demolishing to widen others, and paving and gas-lighting, after the most approved methods, introduced into the dullest and apparently most impassable localities. In the meantime, works and edifices of public utility are being proceeded with, which will be both a benefit and an ornament to the city; and renovations, decorations, improvements, and reconstructions are going on as if in rivalry of each other. The gay capital of fashion, taste, and elegance seems to be rebuilding,—to be rising anew out of the ashes of that old Paris, whose dark, dirty, narrow streets,—whose quaint, crazy-looking houses,—whose dull antiquated hotels,—formed so striking a contrast with the splendour and magnificence of some of its public buildings.

In the old time, all works of importance and all buildings of an extensive or gigantic scale were performed on the account of the government, or perhaps, rather at the will of the sovereign. At the present day, although the authorities have immense works in hand, yet in point of fact, far more is now doing in quantity and utility, a far greater amount and share of work is being performed in one year at the will and pleasure of the new sovereign, the people; than was accomplished during many years under the old system. Moreover, whatever public works are carrying on, or buildings erecting by government, have in these days a more direct and positive object of usefulness.

The movement, then, which we have indicated in Paris, is a movement of moral and material progress highly interesting, and presents evidences of prosperity among the people, and of refinement in the appreciation generally of beauty and of art. For not only is there a very general desire for better habitations, and a disposition to remove from the narrow unhealthy quarters to wider and better streets, manifesting itself of late years among the working classes, but the majority of the constructions got up by private enterprise are